

Capitol Mall Context

Mall Identity and Definition

Land Use

Vehicular Circulation

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Pedestrian Circulation

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Utilities and Infrastructure

Building Useage and Facility Development

Section 1



Planning and Urban Design

Mall Identity and Definition

Analysis

- Capitol Mall is the group of State-owned facilities and properties around and including the State Capitol Building. Although the "Mall" is generally thought of as the blocks adjoining State Street between 3rd and 8th, bounded on the north by Washington and on the south by Jefferson, the State's downtown properties are also located on another dozen blocks outside this area. The most remote of these front on Main Street between 2nd and 4th. All blocks that make up Capitol Mall are rectangular and relatively flat. Most streets in the area have two traffic lanes with curbside parking on both sides. Mature trees and well developed landscaping characterize both privately owned and State-owned properties.
- Little in the Capitol Mall area distinguishes State-owned facilities from nearby private facilities except building scale, the amount of adjoining open space, and to a lesser extent, building color and material. Capitol Mall signage lacks uniformity and Mall boundaries or edges are for the most part imperceptible. Motorists and pedestrians have little way of knowing where private sector professional office facilities stop, and where State governmental facilities begin.

Recommendations

- Create a Capitol Mall District, establish boundaries, and consolidate development of new office and parking facilities within this area.
- Reinforce the "mall" concept along State Street through development of a Capitol Mall pedestrian concourse between 4th and 8th Streets.
- Encourage the continued use of light colored cementitious materials on the exterior of new structures to reflect and complement the precedent set by the Mall's larger buildings.
- Develop a palette of customized pedestrian amenities to give the Capitol Mall District a unique aesthetic character (e.g. benches, planters, trash receptacles, light poles, etc.)
- Develop a Capitol Mall District signage system to include standardized mall identification, building identification, informational, and directional signs.
- Develop a comprehensive Capitol Mall District lighting plan to improve and standardize both the quality and character of street, walkway, building, and facade light fixtures and illumination levels.



State Street / County Courthouse and State Capitol

P1



LBJ Building



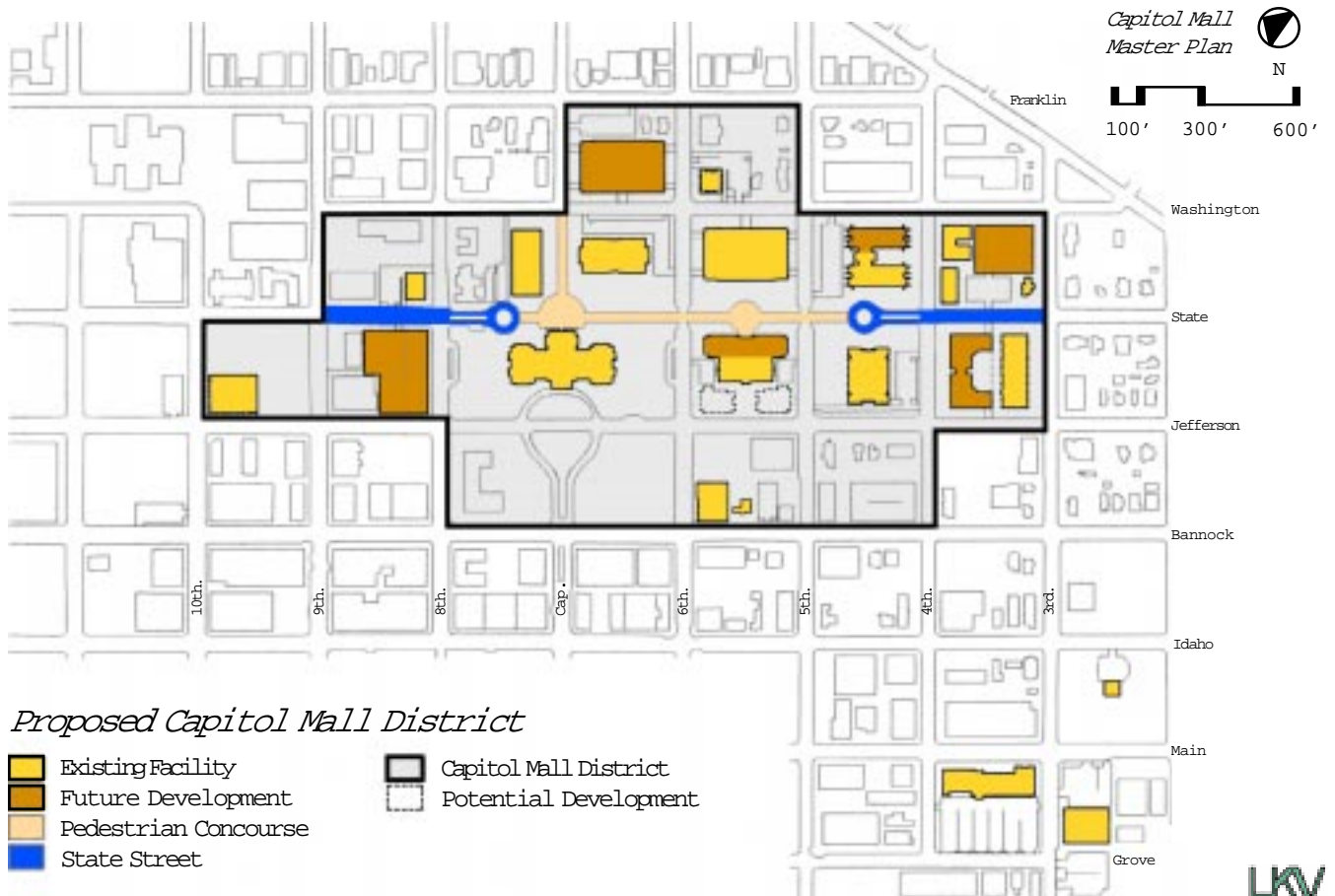
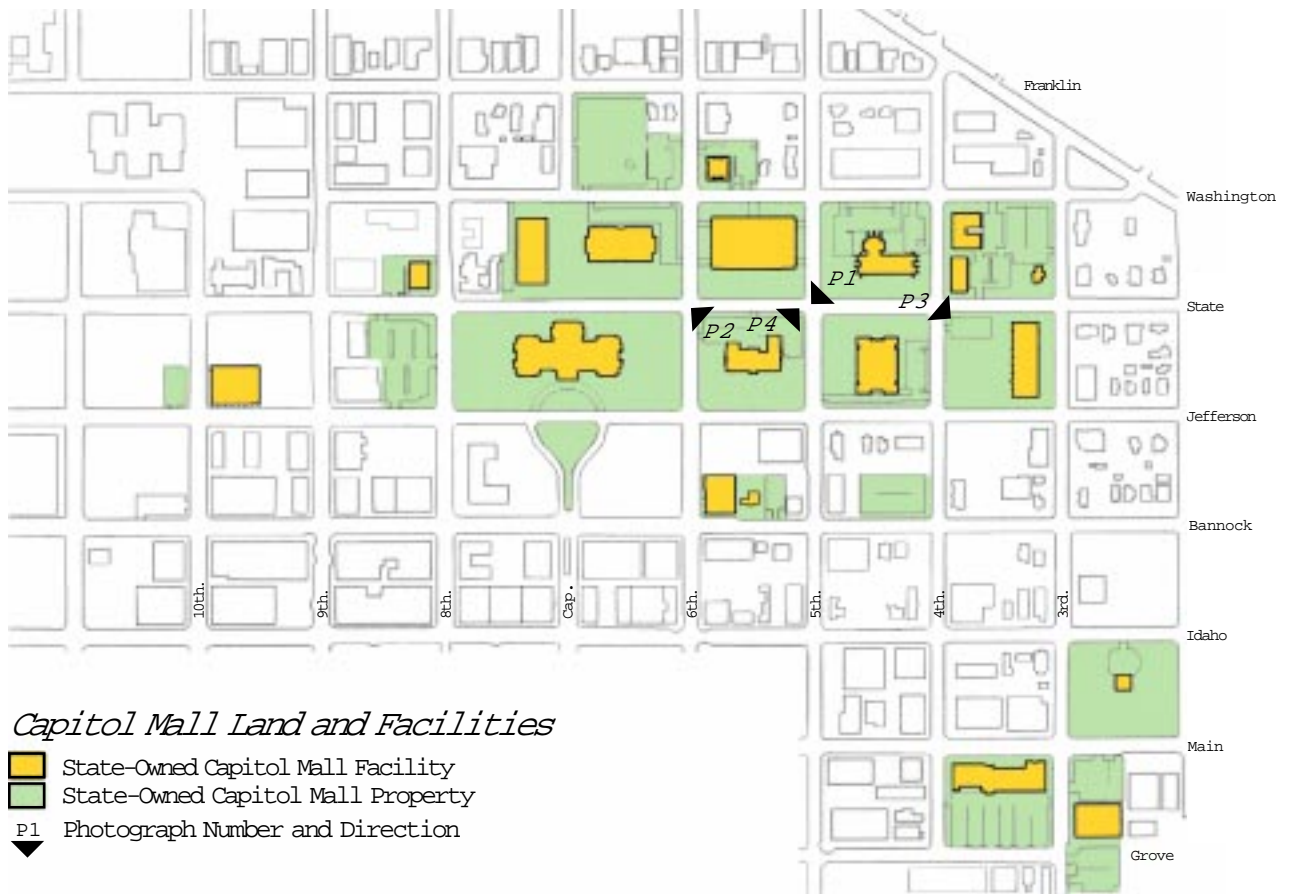
P2 State Library Building

P3



5th and State / Pete T. Cenarrusa Building

P4



Land Use

Analysis

- The blocks and properties that comprise what is known as Capitol Mall are located in the Downtown Planning Area and designated as "Mixed Use" in the Boise City Comprehensive Plan. Adopted City policies for this area include those promoting and encouraging a continued mix of uses including governmental offices; development of additional civic open space; implementation of "new urbanism" planning and design principles; and enhancement of street level pedestrian circulation and activity. Existing zoning designations in the Capitol Mall area include A, Open land; C-5, Central Business; L-0, Limited Office; and R-0, Residential Office. While specific land uses surrounding Capitol Mall facilities and properties are predominantly commercial and professional office, other uses including civic, religious and residential also exist.
- Given the size, location, and configuration of existing Capitol Mall facilities, the blocks containing the Statehouse, the Joe R. Williams and Len B. Jordan Buildings, the State Parking Garage, and the Supreme Court Building appear to be developed at or close to their maximum reasonable capacity. By contrast, the 8th Street and Washington Street Parking Lot blocks, the Pete T. Cenarrusa Building block, and both blocks east of 4th Street are presently underutilized and offer the best opportunities for further development.

Recommendations

- Work with the City of Boise to create a Capitol Mall Zoning District with land use, density, height, setback, parking, and landscaping standards appropriate to large-scale institutional development.
- Locate major new office development required to accommodate agency growth and relocations on blocks adjacent to State Street, with entrances oriented toward State Street wherever possible.
- Locate major new parking facilities at or near the perimeter of the Capitol Mall District, outside the six block core area bounded by Washington, Jefferson, 4th, and 8th Streets.
- Limit new buildings and building additions to four stories in height on the south side of State Street to minimize winter shadows across State Street and across the proposed pedestrian concourse.
- Limit new buildings and building additions to four stories in height on blocks adjacent to the State Capitol block to preserve the pre-eminence and monumentality of the Statehouse.



Federal Building

P1



6th and Franklin (Private Professional Office)

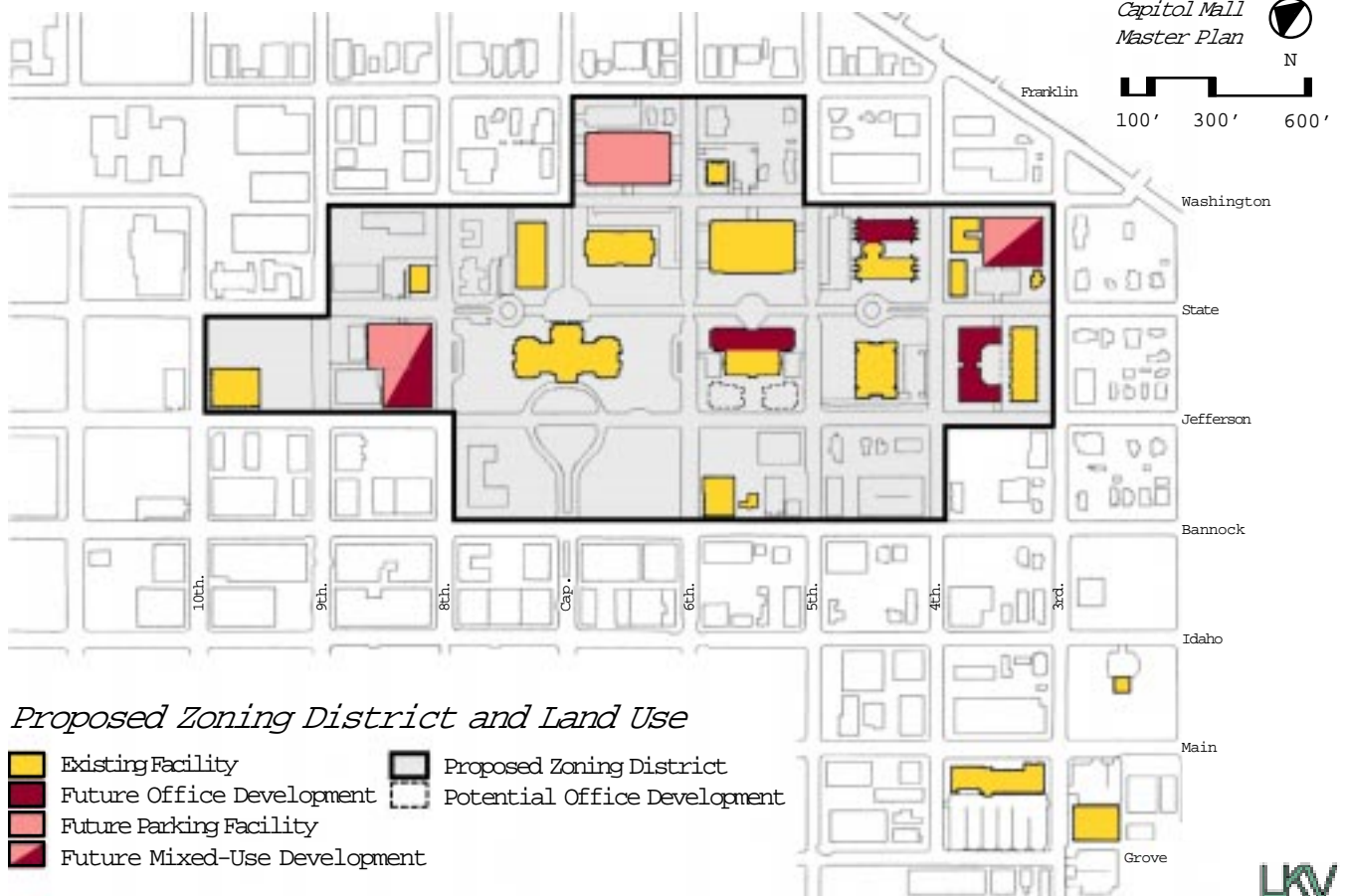
P2



Old Carnegie Library Building (Private Law Office)

P3





Vehicular Circulation

Analysis

- Capitol Mall lies at the eastern edge of the city's one-way grid system. With the exception of State and Bannock, most major Capitol Mall streets are one-way.
- East and west bound traffic in the core area of Capitol Mall is handled primarily by State Street. State Street is two-way, runs immediately behind the Statehouse, and carries a high percentage of east and west bound through traffic. Washington Street, a block north of State, is a little used two-way street that's discontinuous at Ninth. Jefferson Street, a block south of State, is one-way west bound, runs immediately in front of the Statehouse, and transitions to residential at the west end of the Central Business District. South of the Mall's core area, east and west bound traffic is handled by a one-way couplet consisting of Main and Idaho Streets.
- North and south bound traffic in the Capitol Mall area is also handled by one-way couplets; the 8th / Capitol Blvd. and 9th Street couplet and the 5th and 6th Street couplet. Of the two, the former carries a higher percentage of through traffic as a result of better access to North End neighborhoods and the Downtown Core.
- The volume of traffic on State Street behind the State Capitol Building creates serious congestion and pedestrian safety problems. Washington and Jefferson Streets, by contrast, are underutilized and have the potential to form an effective east and west bound one-way couplet.

Recommendations

- Develop a one-way Washington/Jefferson Street couplet between Fort and 9th Streets to divert cross-town traffic around rather than through Capitol Mall.
- Close State Street to all but emergency and maintenance vehicles between 4th and 8th Streets to alleviate congestion and safety hazards on the north side of the Capitol Building, and potential congestion at the proposed north entrance to the County Courthouse Building Expansion.
- Add an additional westbound lane to Bannock Street between Capitol Blvd. and 8th Street to divert northbound vehicles from Capitol to 8th at Bannock rather than Jefferson.
- Provide direct and/or convenient vehicular access to new Capitol Mall parking facilities from the proposed Washington/Jefferson couplet.



State Street Congestion

P1



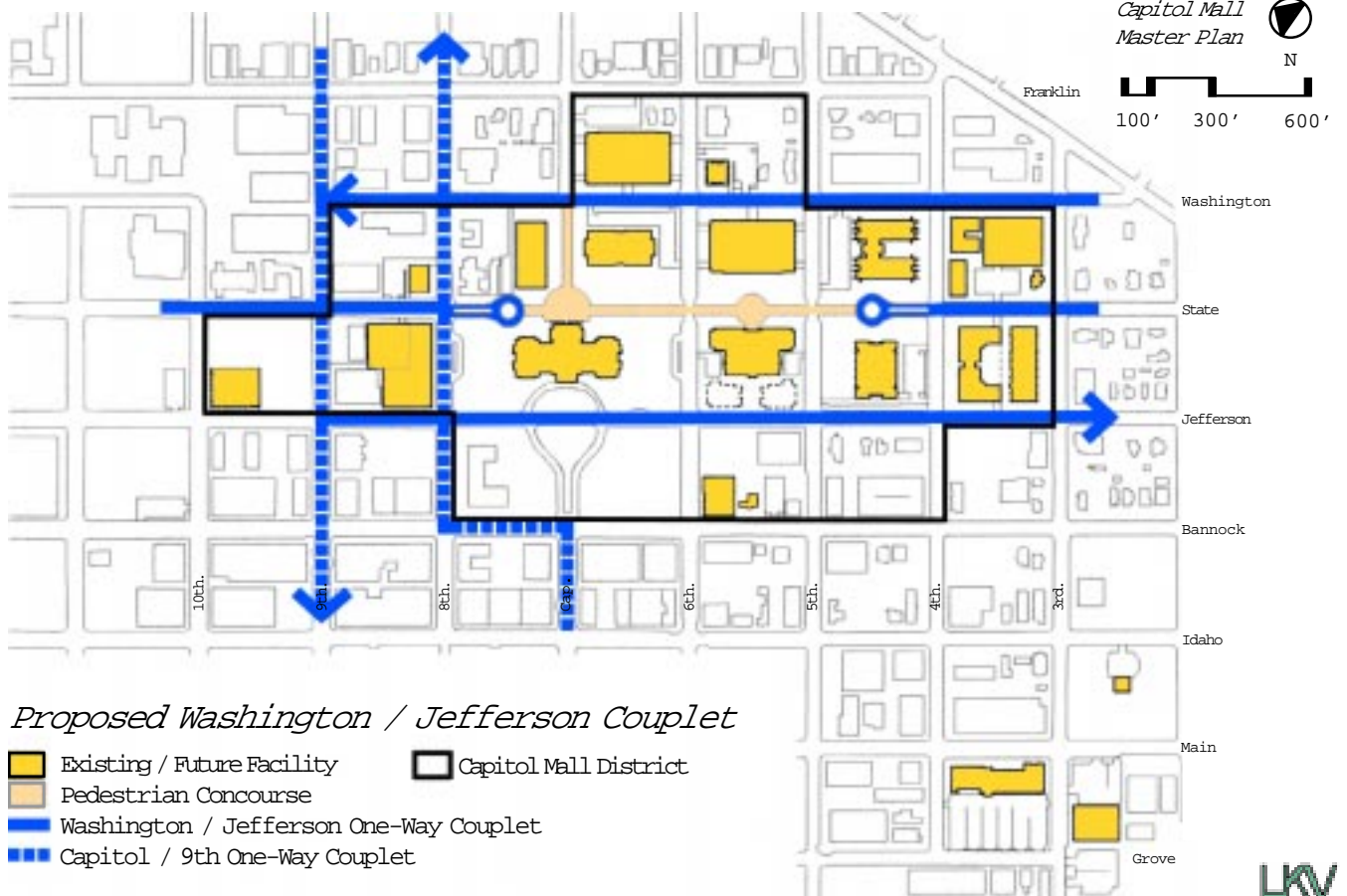
Washington Street Looking West

P2



Jefferson Street Looking East

P3



Parking and Public Access

Analysis

- Capitol Mall parking consists of the State Parking Garage, approximately 24 surface parking lots, and curbside parking marked and metered by the City. Of the State's roughly 1,600 off-street parking spaces, approximately two thirds are in surface lots and the remaining one third are in the State Parking Garage. The number of Capitol Mall FTEs and other personnel per off-street parking space is approximately 1.47, and the amount of useable Capitol Mall floor area per off-street parking space is approximately 458 square feet. When compared with typical private sector office development, this ratio of floor area to number of parking spaces is quite high, and suggests the need for additional off-street Capitol Mall parking.
- Although a small number of off-street visitor spaces are provided, Capitol Mall relies heavily on metered curbside spaces for short-term visitor parking. Most but not all Capitol Mall buildings have an adequate number of accessible parking spaces within a reasonable distance of at least one building entrance. The Statehouse, 954 Jefferson Building, and Capitol Park Plaza are notable exceptions. Curbside short-term pick-up and drop-off areas for cars, buses, and vanpool vans are generally lacking throughout the Mall. Although Capitol Mall is served by several City bus routes, only one bus shelter exists within the core area.

Recommendations

- Provide additional off street parking to better meet current demand as well as provide for projected facility expansions.
- Provide new off street employee parking in multi-story or basement parking garages in lieu of developing numerous additional surface lots.
- Develop a new centrally located, multi-story parking facility on the north side of Washington Street between 6th and 7th Streets to meet current and short term needs.
- Plan to develop parking facilities in conjunction with future office development at the east and west ends of the Capitol Mall District to meet long term needs.
- Provide small, off street surface lots at new office facilities for visitor and handicap parking as well as drop off and pick up needs.
- Develop turn-outs on east and west sides of the Capitol Block with curbside pick up, drop off, and short term visitor parking.
- Provide screened loading/service areas at all new Capitol Mall facilities and in conjunction with major building remodels.
- Develop additional bus shelters and bus stop amenities at major intersections throughout Capitol Mall.



State Parking Garage

P1



County Courthouse Parking Lot

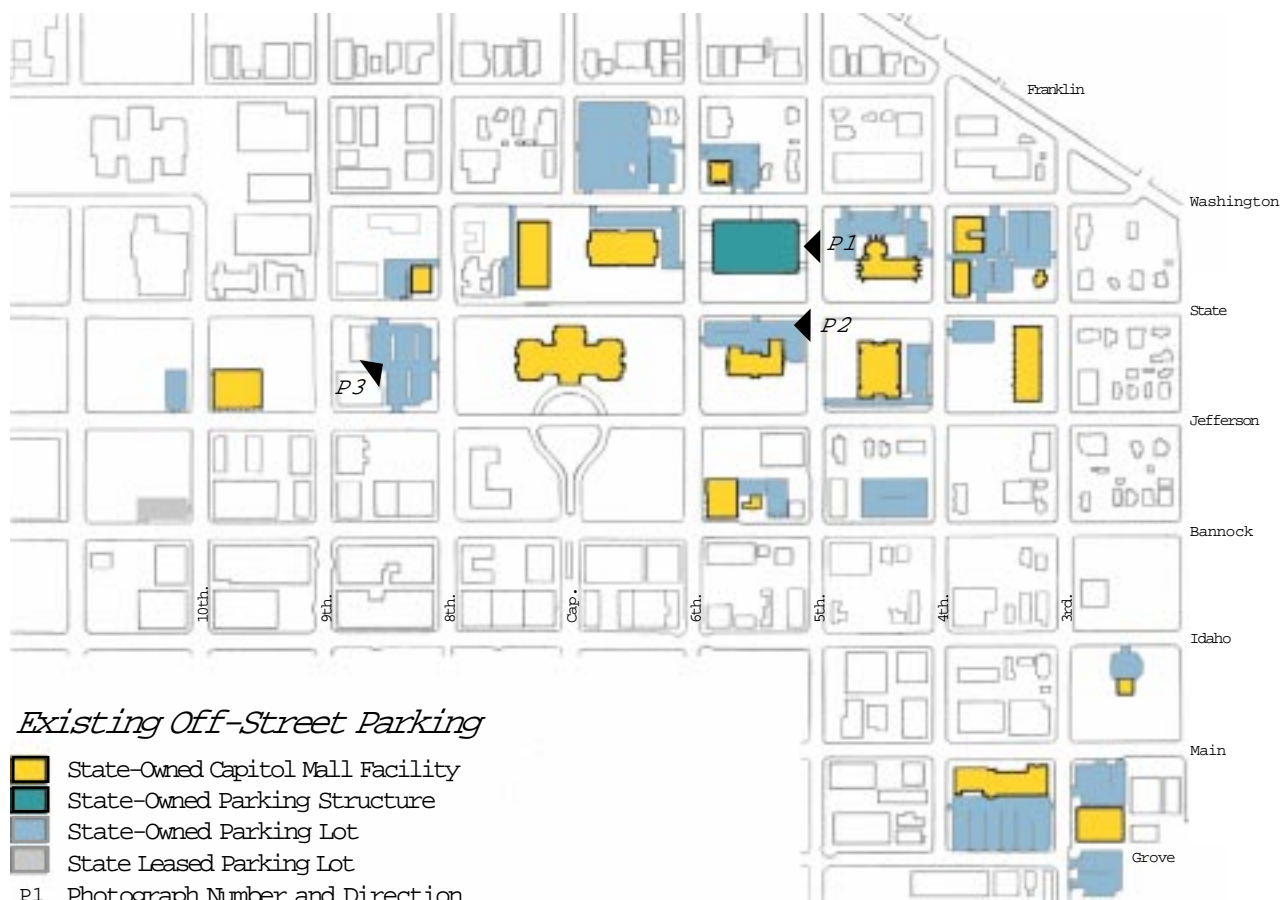
P2



8th Street Parking Lot

P3





Pedestrian Circulation

Analysis

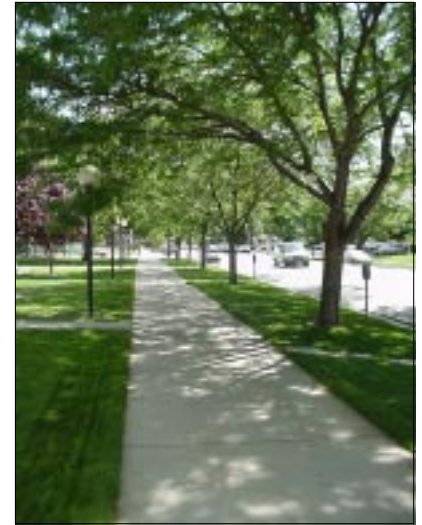
- Pedestrian circulation in Capitol Mall occurs at both street level and below grade. Sidewalks in the public right of way and those within and through blocks are well developed, of adequate width, and in generally good repair. At street level, however, State Street provides a major hindrance to safe and convenient circulation between buildings. 5th and 6th Streets are also hindrances but to a much lesser extent. The only large, hard surfaced congregating space in Capitol Mall is the front of the Capitol. Although many parades, marches, and other functions end at the Statehouse steps, a safe, well-defined, and attractively developed pedestrian linkage between the Capitol and the Downtown Core is lacking. Also lacking is Capitol Mall's namesake, a true, pedestrian oriented "mall" type space not dominated by vehicular traffic.
- Capitol Mall's below grade tunnel system presently connects five of the State's nineteen Capitol Mall facilities. This tunnel provides easy, convenient inter-building circulation during inclement weather and safe circulation in the event of an emergency or disaster, with the possible exception of during localized flooding. The tunnel system should be extended; first to the County Courthouse Building Expansion, then to new Mall parking structures and major new office facilities.

Recommendations

- Develop a Capitol Mall pedestrian concourse between 4th and 8th Streets to provide a primary pedestrian link connecting major Capitol Mall facilities.
- Incorporate plaza spaces into the pedestrian concourse at building entrance locations and narrow or neck down street paving where the pedestrian concourse crosses north / south-running streets.
- Provide direct and convenient pedestrian walkways from all parking lots and facilities to the pedestrian concourse and adjacent office buildings.
- Connect the existing pedestrian tunnel system to the proposed parking facility on Washington Street and to all new major office and multi-use facilities and additions along State Street and the pedestrian concourse.
- Improve pedestrian linkages to transit locations and between the Capitol Mall District and the Downtown Core via Capitol Blvd., 6th Street, and 8th Street.



Statehouse Sidewalk



P1 5th Street Sidewalk

P2



State Street at Capitol Building

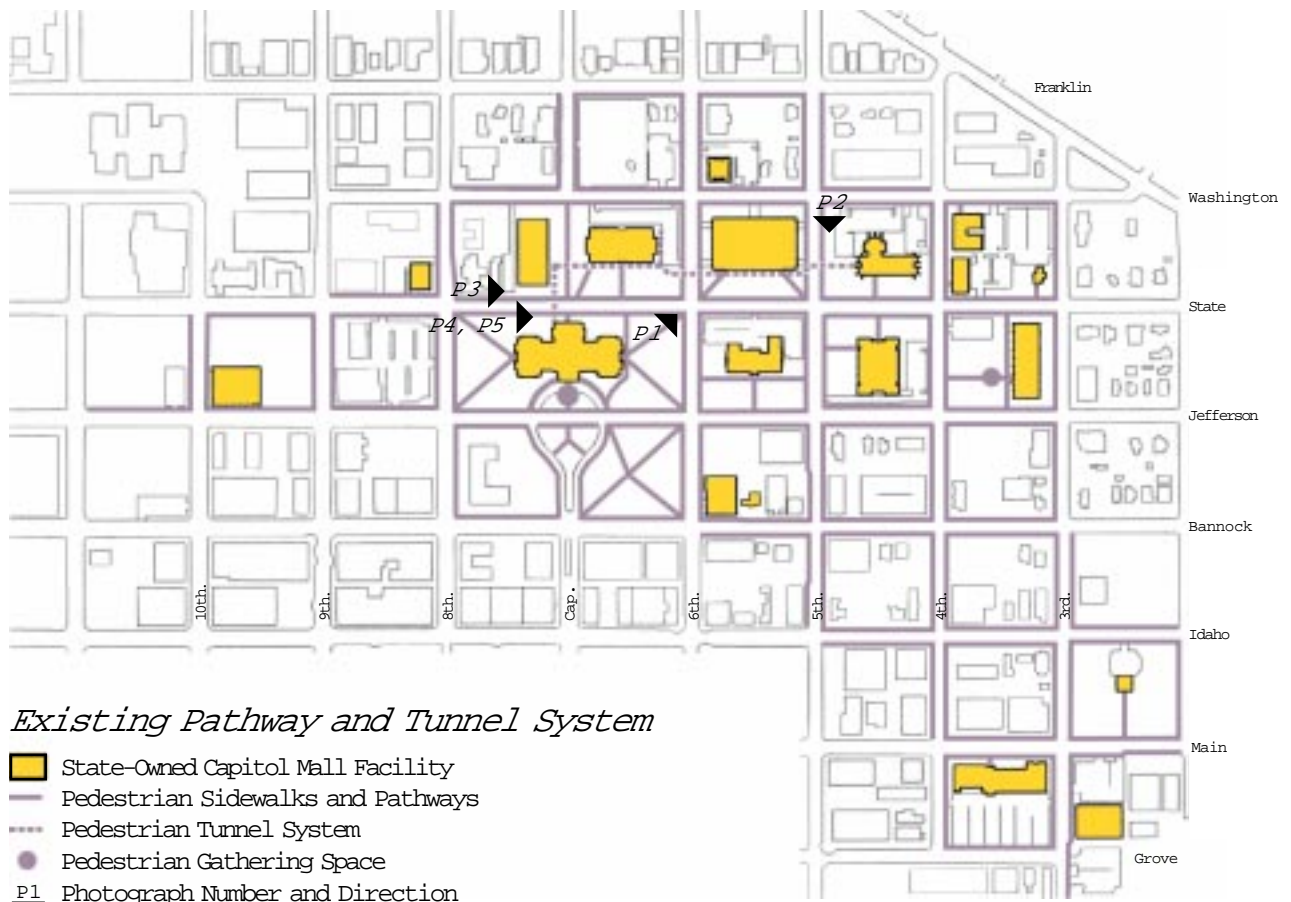
P3



State Street Sidewalk and Crosswalk at Capitol Building



P4, P5



Open Space and Landscape Treatment

Analysis

- Landscaped open space is one of the most unifying elements in Capitol Mall. There are six major areas of Capitol Mall open space. These are Capitol Park and the parkway at the terminus of Capitol Blvd.; the east and west lawns flanking the Statehouse; the lawn and plaza space on the south and west sides of the Len B. Jordan Building; the lawn in front of the County Courthouse Building; the lawn and fountain in front of the State Library Building; and the Assay Building block. Large expanses of grass and mature trees, primarily deciduous, characterize these "outdoor rooms". Large, hard-surfaced gathering spaces do not exist other than at the Statehouse steps.
- Virtually all Capitol Mall facilities have some degree of landscape treatment, though 954 Jefferson and Capitol Park Plaza rely entirely on street trees in the public right of way. Both building yards and larger areas of open space are attractively landscaped and well maintained. Seasonal plantings add visual interest and variety. A mixture of large canopy and smaller ornamental trees have been used effectively. Street tree plantings, however, lack order, consistency, and fail to make a strong visual statement. The Statehouse is the Mall's primary focal point, but little has been done to accentuate its visibility.

Recommendations

- Enhance the "campus" character of Capitol Mall through retention of generous landscaped setbacks between buildings and between buildings and adjacent streets.
- Develop design motifs and standards for walkway paving materials and edging, pedestrian amenities, signage, lighting, street tree planting, seasonal plantings, etc.
- Preserve and enhance views and vistas to and from significant buildings and urban design features.
- Surface the proposed pedestrian concourse with two or more complementary paving materials, emphasizing its continuity while accentuating the uniqueness of each individual block.
- Line the proposed pedestrian concourse with deciduous canopy trees punctuated with generous, open plazas at mid-block locations.
- Incorporate a major design feature in the center of each plaza area, i.e. flag cluster, statue, water feature, civic art, etc. and provide permanent seating groups at the perimeter.
- Enhance the landscape treatment on the south side of Washington Street, particularly if the street becomes the west bound leg of a Washington / Jefferson one-way couplet.



Capitol Mall

P1



Capitol Blvd.

P2



Capitol Mall

P3



State Street

P4



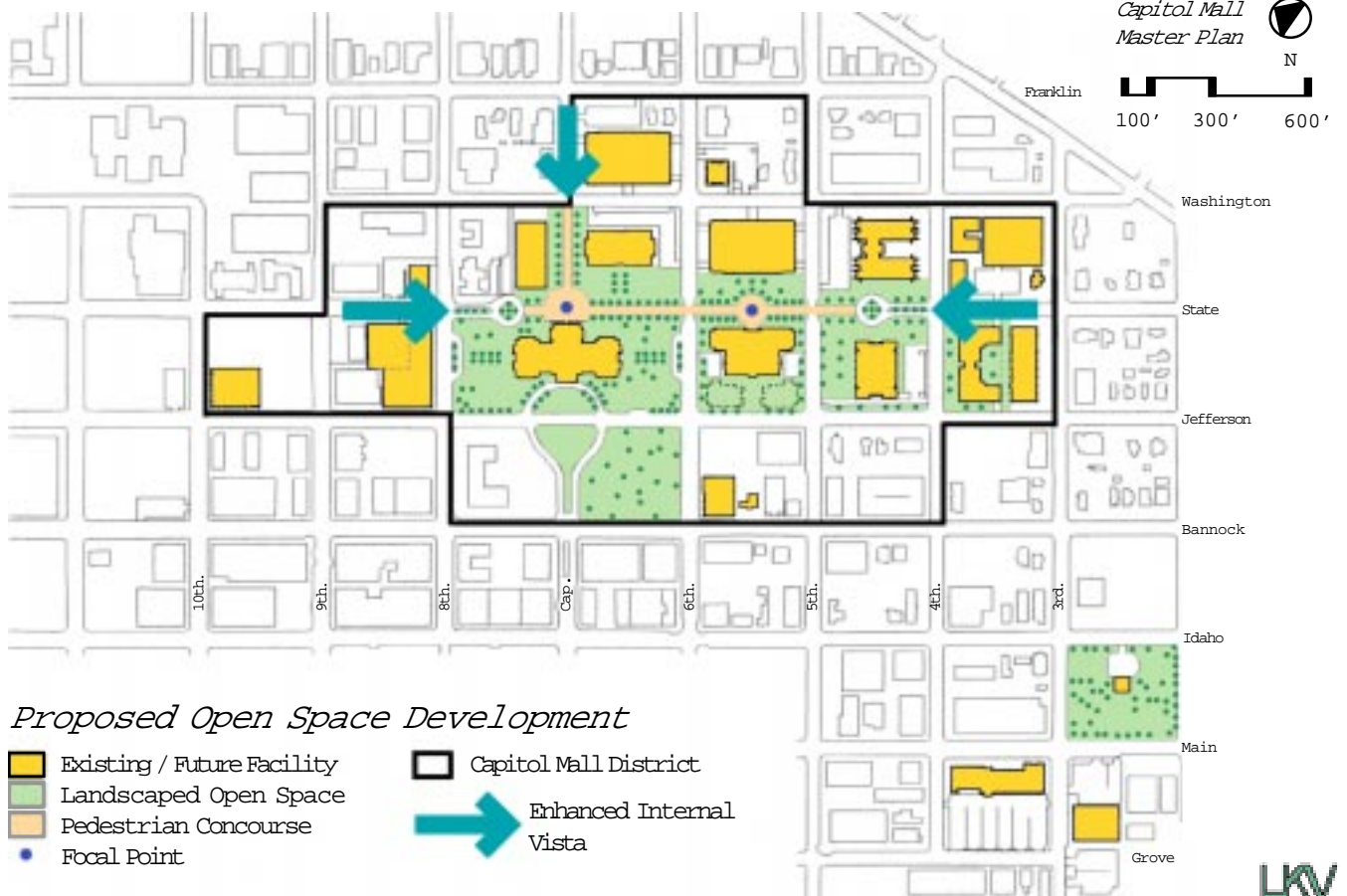
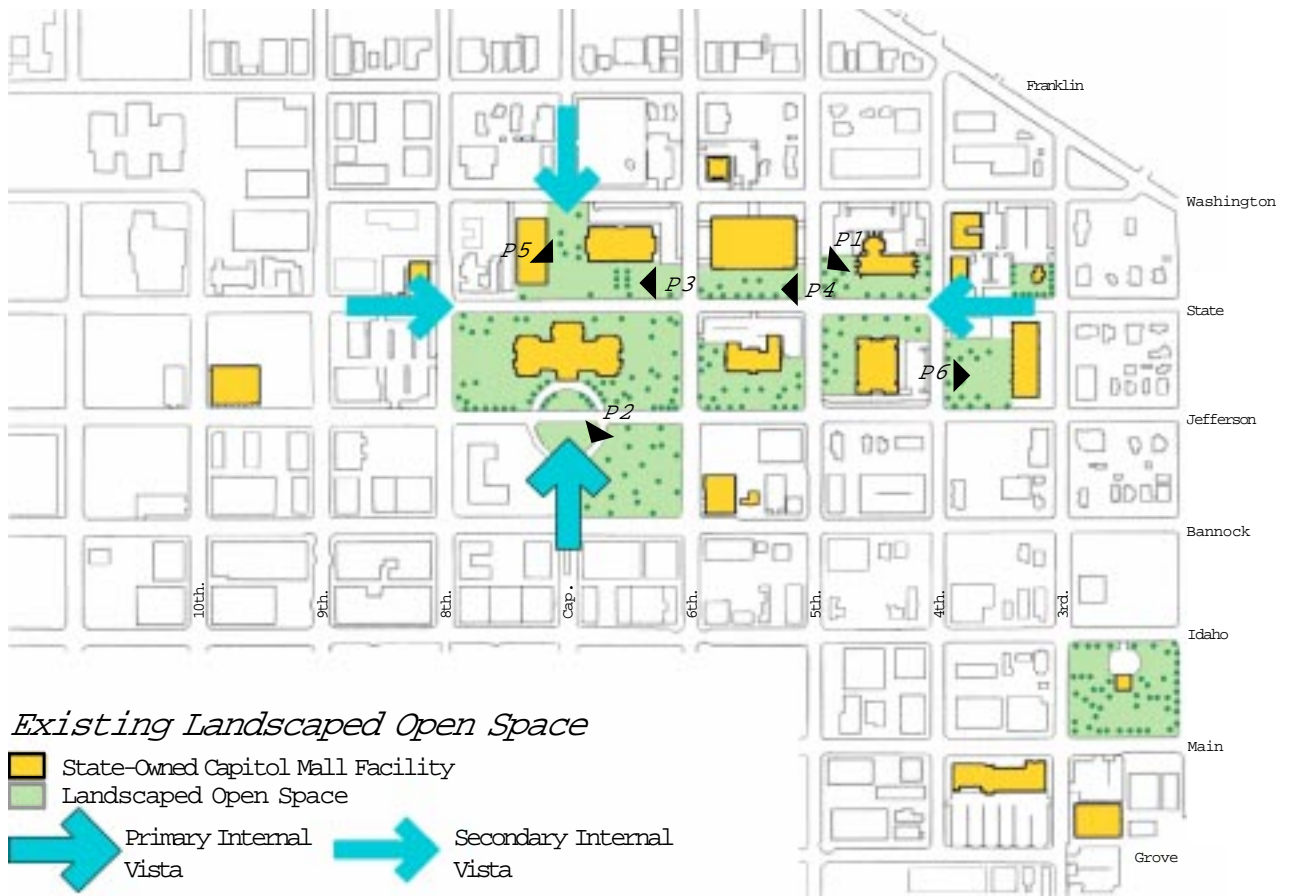
JRW Building Entrance Plaza

P5



State Library Patio and Fountain

P6



Utilities and Infrastructure

Analysis

- Central plant utilities, including chilled water supply and return lines, high pressure steam line, and condensate return line are supplied via the utility tunnel to the State Capitol, Joe R. Williams, Len B. Jordan, Pete T. Cenarrusa, and Supreme Court Buildings. These same utilities are supplied to the State Library Building via underground piping and within the State Parking Garage via internal distribution.
- Geothermal water supply and return lines are supplied via the pedestrian tunnel to the State Capitol, Joe R. Williams, Len B. Jordan, State Parking Garage, and Pete T. Cenarrusa Buildings. Geothermal water is also provided to the Supreme Court Building via the pedestrian tunnel, and the State Library Building and Alexander House via underground piping. The Industrial Administration Building is provided with geothermal water service via the City of Boise and the Assay Office is provided with geothermal water service via the Boise Warm Springs Water District.
- Domestic, fire, and irrigation water is supplied via service lines connected to United Water main lines located throughout the Capitol Mall.
- Natural gas is supplied to state buildings via service lines connected to Intermountain Gas Company main lines throughout the Capitol Mall.
- Sanitary sewer service is provided via service lines connected to the City of Boise sanitary sewer mains located throughout the Capitol Mall.
- Storm water for the state buildings is handled by a combination of on-site storm water management techniques and collection by Ada County Highway District storm drain structures and piping.

Recommendations

- Relocate or modify existing utility mains, services, and associated structures that conflict with proposed building remodels, pedestrian and utility tunnel expansions, and new building developments. Demolish and remove existing improvements that conflict with proposed development. Replace improvements damaged or altered during construction including curbs, gutters, sidewalks, pavement, landscaping, and irrigation.
- Extend utility services to new buildings and upgrade existing utility services as required for building remodels. Extend utility tunnel and/or pedestrian tunnel to new improvements not currently connected to underground infrastructure. Provide chilled water supply and return, high pressure steam, and condensate return from central plant and geothermal water from the state system to new improvements.
- Provide storm water management system for remodels, new buildings, and new parking facilities. New improvements may be allowed to continue draining storm water to the right of way per historical drainage rights, but may be required to pretreat and retain runoff on site.



State Parking Garage / Central Services

P1



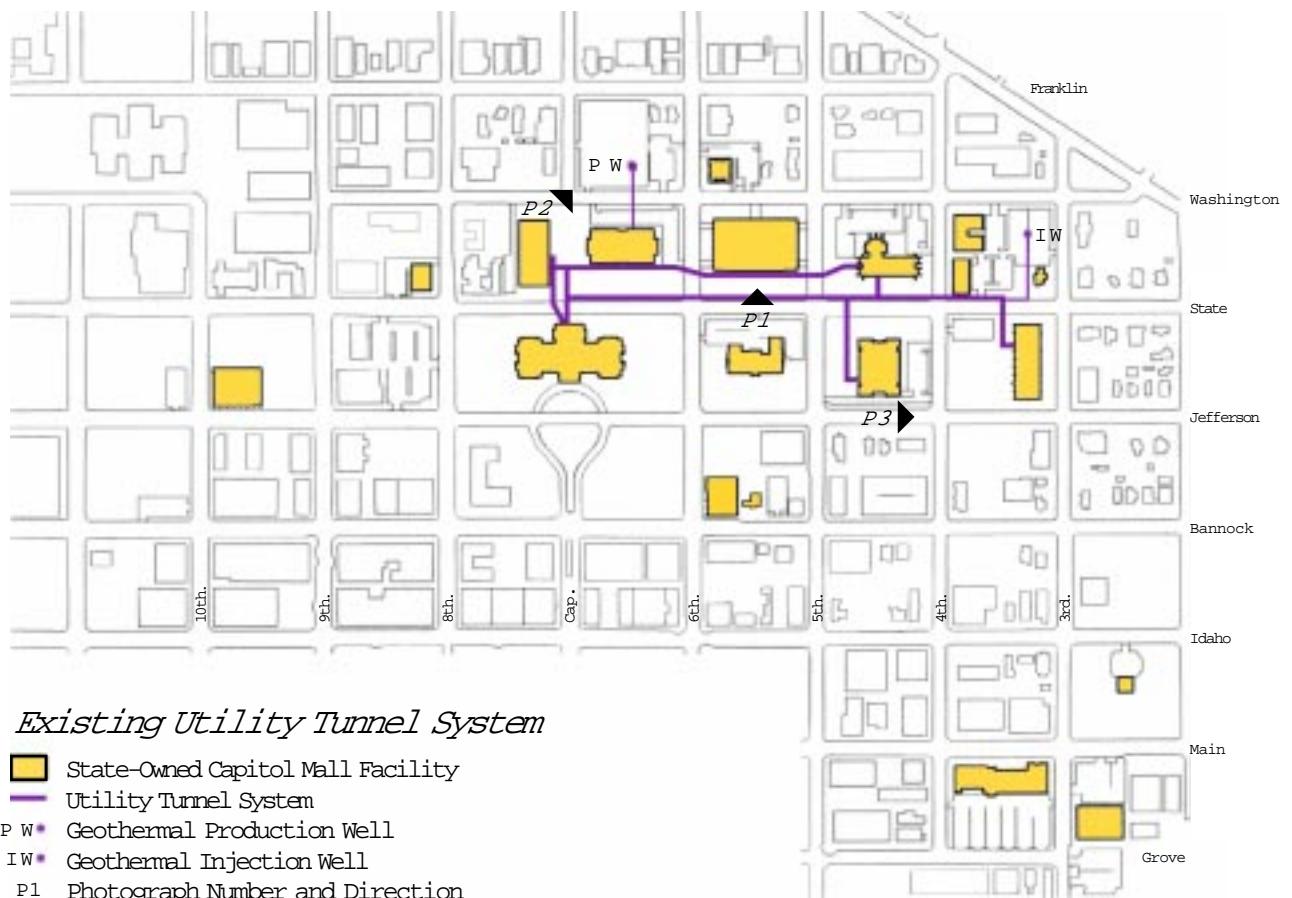
Washington Street Parking Lot / Geothermal Production Well Bldg.

P2



Typical Right of Way Improvements

P3



Building Usage and Facility Development

Analysis

- Of the 19 State owned facilities in Capitol Mall, 14 currently house State departments or agencies. The agencies, or portions thereof, that occupy these buildings provide primarily administrative and support service functions within Idaho State government. Most agencies that provide walk-in client services do so from field offices located outside Capitol Mall. A number of departments and smaller self-governing agencies that could benefit from being in a State owned facility and sharing common amenities presently lease space in other parts of the City.
- Most agencies that have a close working relationship with the Office of the Governor and the Legislature are appropriately located in buildings adjacent to the Statehouse. Similarly, most entities that require a high degree of public accessibility are located at ground level.
- Additional general office space is needed within Capitol Mall to meet both present and projected agency needs and to accommodate agencies and departments needing or desiring a Capitol Mall location. Additional meeting and conference space is also needed, especially large hearing rooms and reception spaces.

Recommendations

- Use existing Capitol Mall facilities and develop new facilities to accommodate departments and agencies requiring close physical proximity to the Executive and Legislative branches of State government.
- Renovate and expand the County Courthouse Building to meet short term needs, develop space adjacent to the Pete T. Cenarrusa or State Library Buildings to meet mid term needs, and develop additional buildings on the Public Works and 8th Street Parking Lot blocks to meet long term needs.
- Locate agencies requiring a high degree of interaction with the Governor and Legislature in buildings close to the Statehouse, and locate agencies requiring regular access by the public in buildings with good street access and availability of parking.
- Locate agencies or portions thereof requiring public accessibility on ground floors, and agencies or portions thereof requiring a high level of security or isolation on above or below grade floors.
- Co-locate smaller agencies in State owned buildings to increase efficiency and share common facilities and amenities.
- Develop major Capitol Mall meeting, conference, and reception spaces in the County Courthouse Building and other multi-tenant buildings.



Statehouse and JRW, LBJ, and PTC Buildings



P1-4

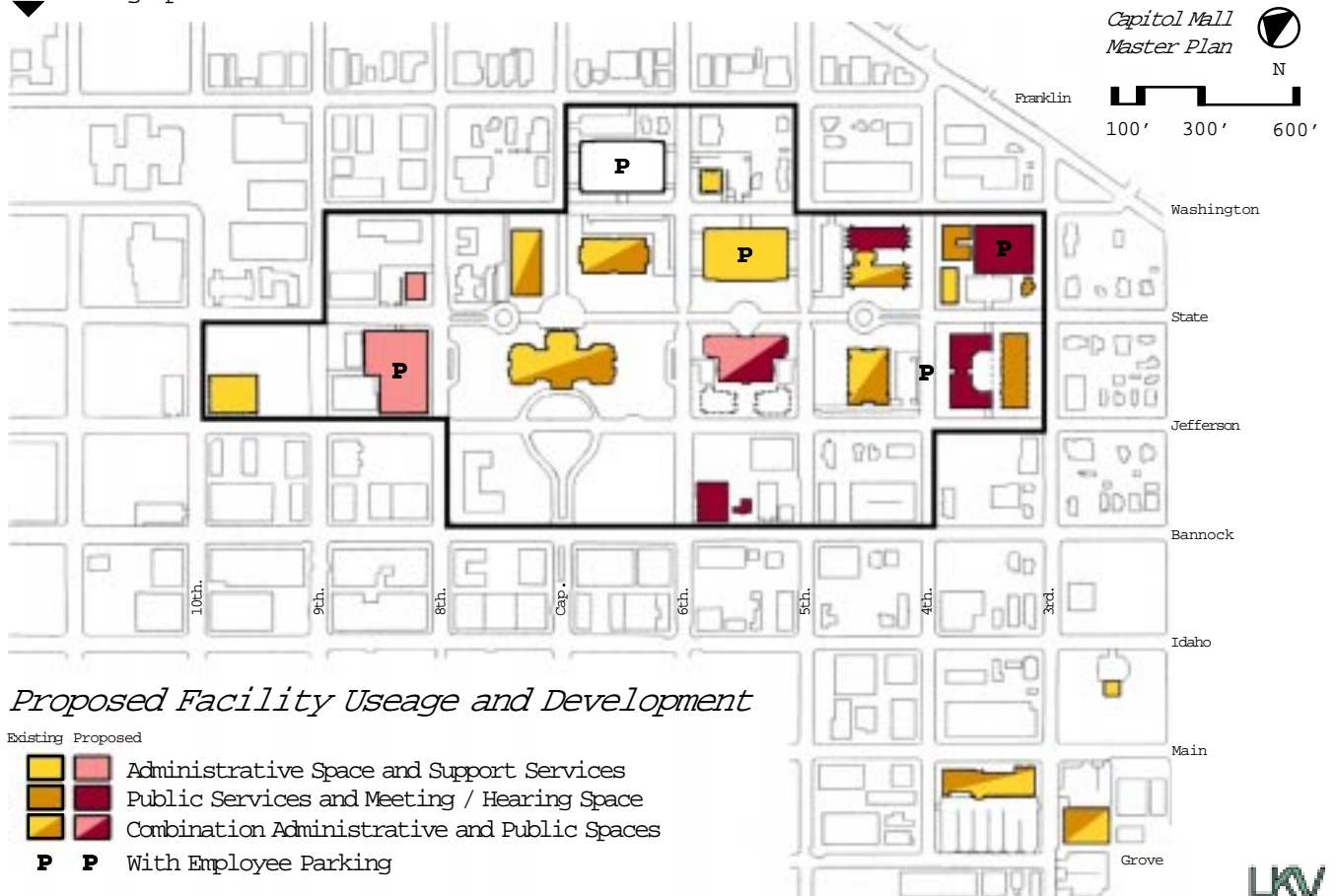


County Courthouse Building

P5-6



Future Development on County Courthouse Block





State Capitol Building



Len B. Jordan Building